

# TRIBUNE

Second Quarter 1997

## Fifty Years Of Breaking Barriers

Fifty years ago, Jackie Robinson took his position at first base at Ebbets Field... and changed both sports and America forever. On April 15, 1947, 28-year-old Jackie Robinson broke the color line in baseball—the most significant achievement in the sport. His life stands as a testament to both the strength of his character and the depth of the problems he faced.

This summer the Cleveland Indians will share in Major League Baseball's recognition of Jackie Robinson's accomplishments.

Robinson was a splendid athlete and a four-sport collegiate star at UCLA. He was a pioneer whose supreme talent and inner strength passed the test of hatred. Robinson was hit by more pitches in the first two months of the '47 season than any National League player the entire previous year. He was also a pioneer that forged the trail for all who followed. Eleven weeks later on a sunny afternoon in Chicago, a young outfielder named Larry Doby sat in the visitors clubhouse at Comiskey Park and put on a Cleveland Indians uniform for the first time, changing the face of the more dominant American League.



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Gregory Drezdson

## 1997—An All-Star Year

Opening Day is special for each and every Major League Baseball club. But when you're the two-time defending American League Central Division Champions; when you've sold out 131 consecutive games and your fans just bought every ticket for the upcoming season; and when your storied franchise will soon host its record fifth MLB All-Star Game later in July, Opening Day is the commencement of a season of celebration and high expectations.

The names, the uniforms, and, in Cleveland, even the Ballpark changes, but one thing has remained consistent for each Opening Day—

it has always had special meaning for fans and players alike—especially in Cleveland. As one of the charter franchises in the American League, the Indians have certainly not lacked in Opening Day pageantry and drama. In the 1975

home opener, Frank Robinson made a memorable debut as the first African-American player/manager in Major League history, clubbing a dramatic home run in the Indians 5-3 win over the New York Yankees. And in the 1994 Opener, the inaugural game at Jacobs Field, the

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Gregory Drezdson





## Opener (cont. from page 1)

guest of honor was none other than President of the United States Bill Clinton.

The 1997 Home Opener was a celebration of Cleveland's All-Star heritage. The Indians organization will host their record fifth Midsummer Classic on July 8 at Jacobs Field surpassing the Giants, White Sox, Pirates, Reds, and Twins/Senators, each of whom hosted four All-Star games. The festive dressing at Jacobs Field was highlighted by five enormous star-shaped balloons, each one representing a year that Cleveland has hosted the MLB All-Star Game: 1935, 1954, 1963, 1981, and 1997.

As the field was being dressed, four prominent Indians alumni, each commemorating a past All-Star season in Cleveland, paraded around the warning track in vintage convertibles from the season in which they appeared in an All-Star game in Cleveland. **RHP MEL HARDER** represented the 1935 game, **2B BOBBY AVILA** represented the 1954

## BASEBALL BY THE LAKE

Looking for something fun and exciting to do this summer? Why not gather a few friends together for a road trip to see the Tribe's future stars in Buffalo! It's only three hours away, and there's lots of things to see and do.



The Buffalo Bisons, Cleveland's Triple-A affiliate is offering "Baseball By The Lake," a great baseball getaway for Tribe fans of all ages. The package includes:

- Deluxe hotel accommodations at the Buffalo Hilton, which is within walking distance of the Ballpark;
- Two prime seats for the Bisons game at North AmeriCare Park;
- A \$30 gift certificate for Pettibones Grille, the Ballpark Restaurant.

Prices are \$154 for a double occupancy (\$142 Weekdays); and children (14 and under are \$25). For information on game dates and reservations, contact Peter Spike at the Travel Team, the official "Baseball By The Lake" tour operator, at 1-800-245-8326.

game, **RHP JIM "MUDCAT" GRANT** represented the 1963 game, and **RHP LEN BARKER** represented the 1981 game.

Following the All-Star festivities the Indians honored the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's integration of Major League Baseball with a JumboTron salute to the pioneer that also included a salute to the Indians own barrier breakers—**LARRY DOBY** and **FRANK ROBINSON**.

As the 1997 Indians were introduced, the back-to-back "Champs" flag, commemorating the team's 1995 American League Championship and '96 American League Central Division Championship, was hoisted to the top of the scoreboard.

As pregame festivities wound down, the team managed to carry the momentum of the celebration onto the playing field. The Anaheim Angels jumped to an early 2-0 lead in the top of the second inning on

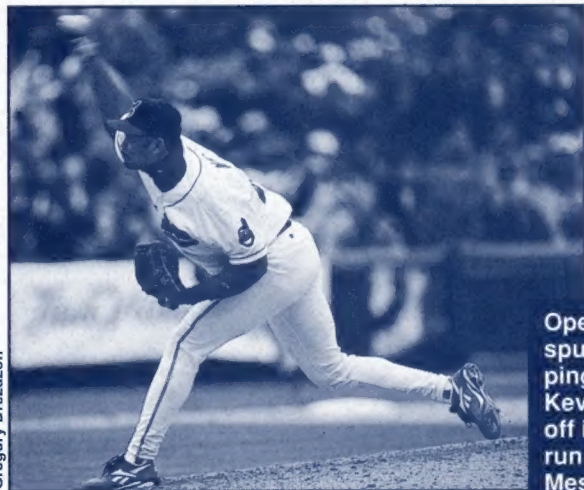
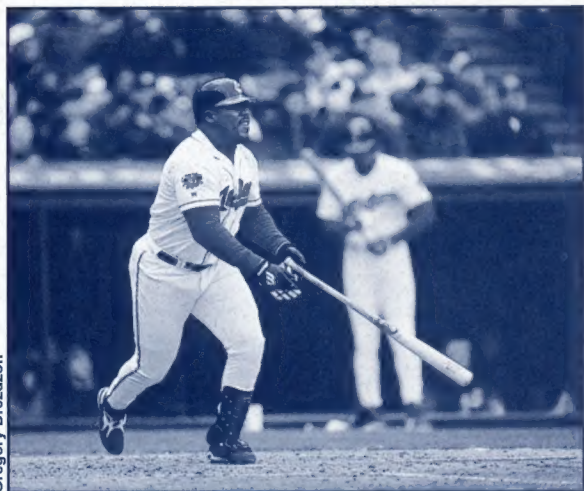
a two-run single by catcher **JORGE FABREGAS**. The lead would be short-lived as the Tribe rallied for six runs in the bottom of the inning highlighted by **KEVIN MITCHELL**'s three-run homer. Indians starter **CHAD OGEA** surrendered a single run in the fourth, cutting the Tribe lead to 6-3 before the Indians exploded for another half dozen runs in the fifth, where it was **MANNY RAMIREZ**'s turn to go deep. The young outfielder crushed a three-run homer off Anaheim's **SHIGETOSHI HASEGAWA**.

In the seventh, the Indians tacked on two more runs on **OMAR VIZQUEL**'s two-run double and the Tribe added a final tally in the eighth on Vizquel's RBI single. In the ninth inning, Tribe closer **JOSE MESA**, who was activated just prior to the game, entered the game to a rousing ovation and retired the Angels on one hit. When the dust cleared, the final score was Cleveland 15, Anaheim 3.

The 15 runs scored by the Indians set a new franchise record for the home opener. Newcomers **DAVID JUSTICE** and **MARQUIS GRISSOM** each collected three hits in their Cleveland debut.

**CHAD OGEA** pitched seven strong innings for the win, allowing just six hits and three earned runs.

When it was all said and done, the trend remained. The names, the uniforms, and even the Ballparks may change, but the good feeling remains.



Opening Day at Jacobs Field spurred the Indians to a whopping 15-3 win against the Angels. Kevin Mitchell started the action off in the second with a three-run homer and Tribe closer Jose Mesa, activated prior to the game, ended it on just one hit.